

The Mission Field

From the National Capital

Sunday School Convention.—It is an annual gathering and represents an association of the Sunday schools in the District of Columbia.

Its first session was held on Monday evening, Nov. 12; its closing session, Wednesday night, Nov. 15. Our own school was represented with five delegates. Many very gifted speakers who are prominent in Sunday school work were present from different parts of the United States and gave most helpful addresses.

These conventions can not help but prove a great blessing to the work at large. If I had the time I should be glad to give a few of the valuable suggestions and thoughts given out at this convention. I believe I will mention a few of them at any rate.

Teachers and Superintendents taught of God.—This thought was made conspicuous in several speeches. For years I have been greatly impressed with it, but never has it presented itself with such force and power as at this time. O, fellow worker, do you realize what it means to be taught of God? It does not mean simply to glance over the lesson as outlined in the quarterly a few times before coming to the class. It means to get in *real touch with God* by an active, personal experience. It means to have "heart to heart" talks with Him. And this can not be while our lives are feasting on worldly things—while we do not enjoy the things of the spirit. We want *heart power*. This means Christ formed in us as the hope of glory.

Praying personally for each member in the class.—I had often emphasized this—have referred to it again and again in my sermons. It did me much good to hear several of the speakers at this conference speak so emphatically along this line. Fellow teacher, do you pray regularly by *name* for your scholars? I cannot see how you can help if you are in touch with Christ who bears you personally before our Heavenly Father with heart-loving intercession. Of course, if our lives are *worldly*, and we do not delight in spiritual things, we will not care to pray in this way, in fact, we could not thus pray—we might "say our prayers." Better save our breath than do this and mock God.

O, if our lives are in full communion with God, as teachers, get down on our knees before him with our class books open and speak to God in behalf of each one until the entire list has been covered.

Every true pastor knows what this means. O, what blessing, what a flood of heavenly joy pours into the heart and soul of that pastor who prays regularly for each member of his flock. Brother, if you have not yet learned to do this, begin at once. If once this becomes a settled habit with you, you will not be content to stop with the names of the members of your flock but you will add many other names to your prayer list and

pray for them often. Later I will perhaps refer to some personal experience along the line.

God revealed thru the Word.—How many there are who read God's Word simply as a *duty*. They find no real pleasure in it. It is because God is not seen when they read his Word. And he is not seen in his Word until that same Word is "made flesh." The entrance of his Word gives light and surely the light that God gives is full of joy. If we would be taught of God, we must after all know him principally thru the Word. The Word should be first in everything. The various lesson helps are useful in a sense, but they should be made secondary.

Necessity of prayer.—This time I refer to prayer for ourselves as teachers. It is impossible to communicate that which we do possess, and we can not possess much unless we are often alone with God asking for his wisdom. A certain street car conductor in this city who has to go on duty at three o'clock in the morning, rises one half hour earlier than otherwise would be necessary for the express purpose of spending that half-hour in prayer. His pastor learned of the habit of this man, and the result was that he was led to know much more of God thru prayer. I have simply dropped these reflections as they have come to my mind while writing of this conference. Would like to write much more, but my time is up.

Another addition.—Sister Ann Eliza Armentrout of New Market, Virginia, came into our midst last week and expects to make this her home. We bid her welcome and trust that she may be a blessing to the work. Pray for us. W. M. LYON.

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The Sunday School

LESSON 9—DECEMBER 2, 1900

The Rich Young Ruler—Matt. 19:16-26

Golden Text—Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God.—Mark 10:24.

Lesson Thought.—The most important thing to seek after is eternal life.

Time—A. D. 30, in March.

Place—Somewhere in Perea, on the journey of Jesus down the Jordan.

Home Readings

Ex. 20:1-17; Prov. 30:1-19; Mark 10:23-31; Luke 9:18-26; Matt. 6:16-23; I John 5:1-12.

Lesson Links

This lesson follows the lesson of two weeks ago quite closely. The last lesson, as you notice, was a temperance lesson not connected in time with the life of Christ which we have been studying all the year. Between the lesson of the Cleansing of the Ten Lepers and this lesson the following events took place: The Ten Lepers were cleansed on the border of Galilee and Samaria, as Jesus was starting for Jerusalem for the last time. Then he went down into Perea again, where he spoke about when the kingdom was

to come (Luke 17:20-37.) There in Perea he spoke the parables of the unjust judge and of the Pharisee and publican, and of the unmerciful servant. Then he gave some good advice on divorce. Then taking the children into his arms he blessed them. Then comes our lesson of today.

Lesson Story

Jesus was on his way thru Perea up to Jerusalem. And one morning as he was starting out on the road a rich young man who was also a ruler, probably of a synagogue, came running up to Jesus and kneeling down said, "Good Master, what good action must I do that I may have eternal life?"

Like many today. This young man's answer shows that he had the same false notion that some have today, that by doing good deeds we can earn salvation. Salvation, or eternal life, is not earnable; God has to give it to us. If we could by our own deeds earn it, God need not have sent Jesus to die for us.

Christ's reply. Now this young man had qualities that commended him to Christ, for we read that he "came running,"—that shows enthusiasm and a great desire to know what he asked. He also kneeled down to Christ, which shows a humble, reverent spirit. But his question showed that he had not a right view of Christ. And in order to correct his misunderstanding of Christ's person and work, shown by his calling Christ "Good Master." Jesus asked, "Why do you call me 'good Master'?" There is none good but God. And if I am good, I am also divine. I am either simply a rabbi or teacher, or else am divine. You by your address have shown that you think me greater than the rabbis. And I am, I am divine. But if you desire to enter the life which I came to reveal, keep the commandments." And Christ's reply was wise, for if one could keep the commandments really and perfectly, he would not need Christ. But Jesus told him this to reveal the fact of the young man's sin, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin," says Paul.

The young man's surprise. "Which commandments?" the young man asked. Jesus replied, "Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not say what is false about others, Honor thy father and mother, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as if he were thyself." Jesus quoted the Ten Commandments, with the exception of those bearing on his duty to God. The young ruler answered doubtless, honestly, "All these have I kept from my youth up." And as he understood them, he probably had done so. But Jesus will probe his soul to the very bottom. As Jesus saw his youth, his purity, his unstained manhood and his evident desire to do something else meritorious, mistaken though he was, Jesus loved him.

The supreme test. So in order to test him thoroughly Jesus added, "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell what you have and give